MARVEL LEGACY

LOKI: SORCERER SUPREME

383

DOCTOR STRANGE®

The World Tree

by

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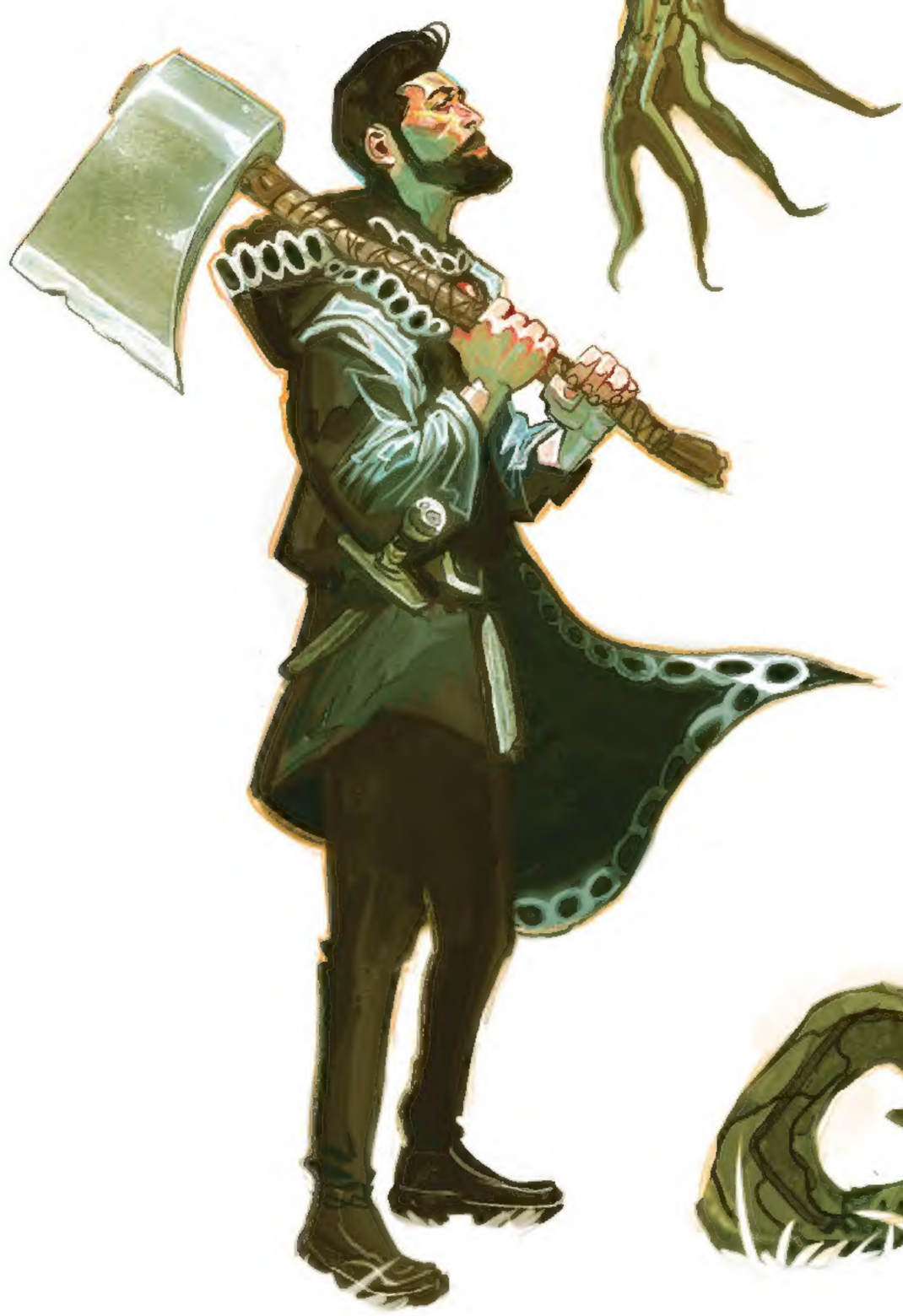

STEPHEN STRANGE WAS A PREEMINENT SURGEON UNTIL A CAR ACCIDENT DAMAGED THE NERVES IN HIS HANDS. HIS EGO DROVE HIM TO SCOUR THE GLOBE FOR A MIRACLE CURE. INSTEAD, HE FOUND A MYSTERIOUS WIZARD CALLED THE ANCIENT ONE WHO TAUGHT HIM MAGIC AND THAT THERE ARE THINGS IN THIS WORLD BIGGER THAN HIMSELF. THESE LESSONS ENABLED STEPHEN TO BECOME THE SORCERER SUPREME, EARTH'S FIRST DEFENSE AGAINST ALL MANNER OF MAGICAL THREATS. HIS PATIENTS CALL HIM...

DOCTOR STRANGE

LAST TIME...

LOKI IS THE SORCERER SUPREME, AND A GOOD ONE, BUT HE'S LOOKING FOR A SPELL (HIDDEN IN APPRENTICE ZELMA STANTON'S SOUL): THE EXILE OF SINGHSOON, WHICH WOULD TRANSFER ALL OF THE WORLD'S MAGIC TO HIM. STRANGE CAN'T LET LOKI SUCCEED: IT WOULD ENDANGER ALL OF EXISTENCE. (PLUS, LOKI ACCIDENTALLY CAUSED THE HEART FAILURE OF STEPHEN'S LAST FRIEND: A HOUND DOG NAMED BATS.)

TO FACE THIS EXTRAORDINARY THREAT, STRANGE ASKED FOR EXTRAORDINARY HELP: THE RETURN OF THE SENTRY.

"LOKI: SORCERER SUPREME"
PART THREE

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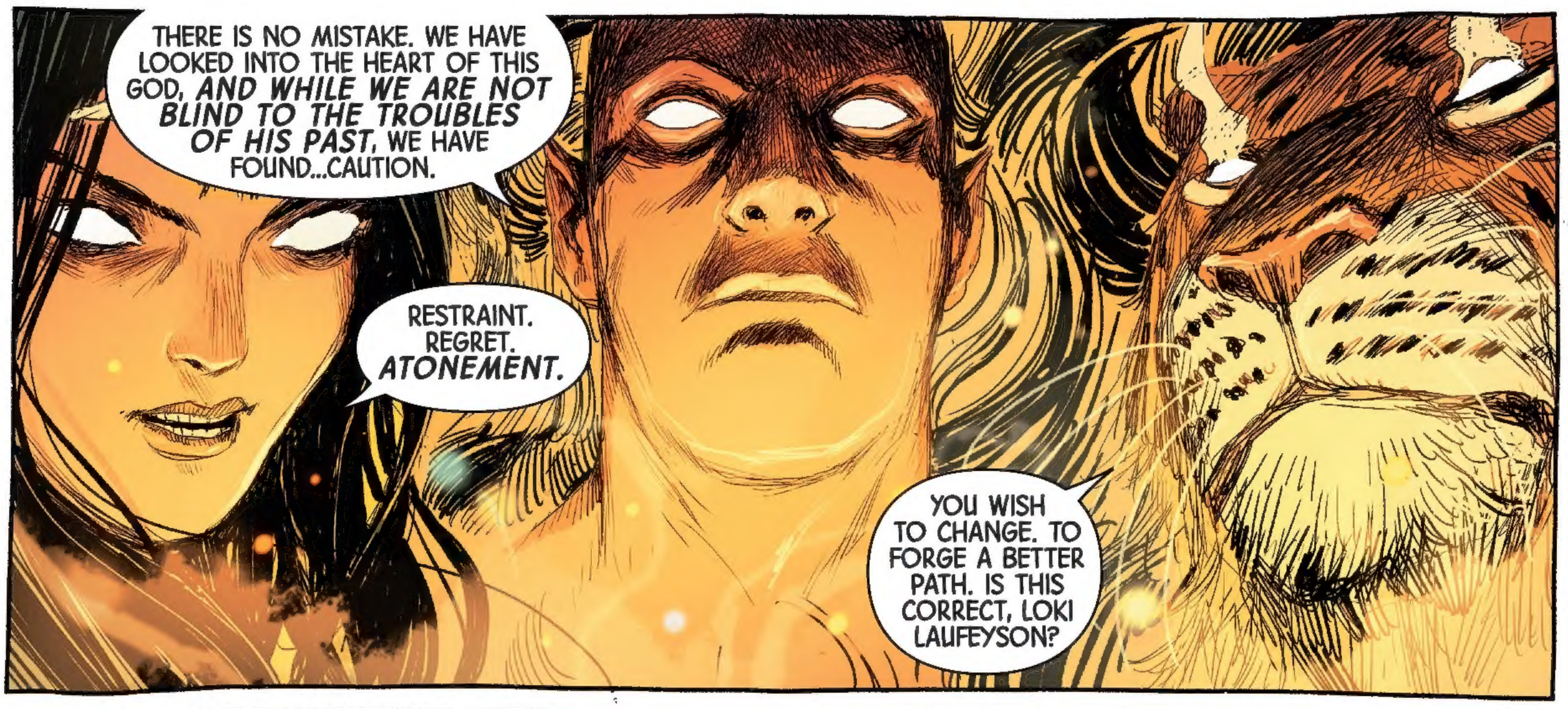
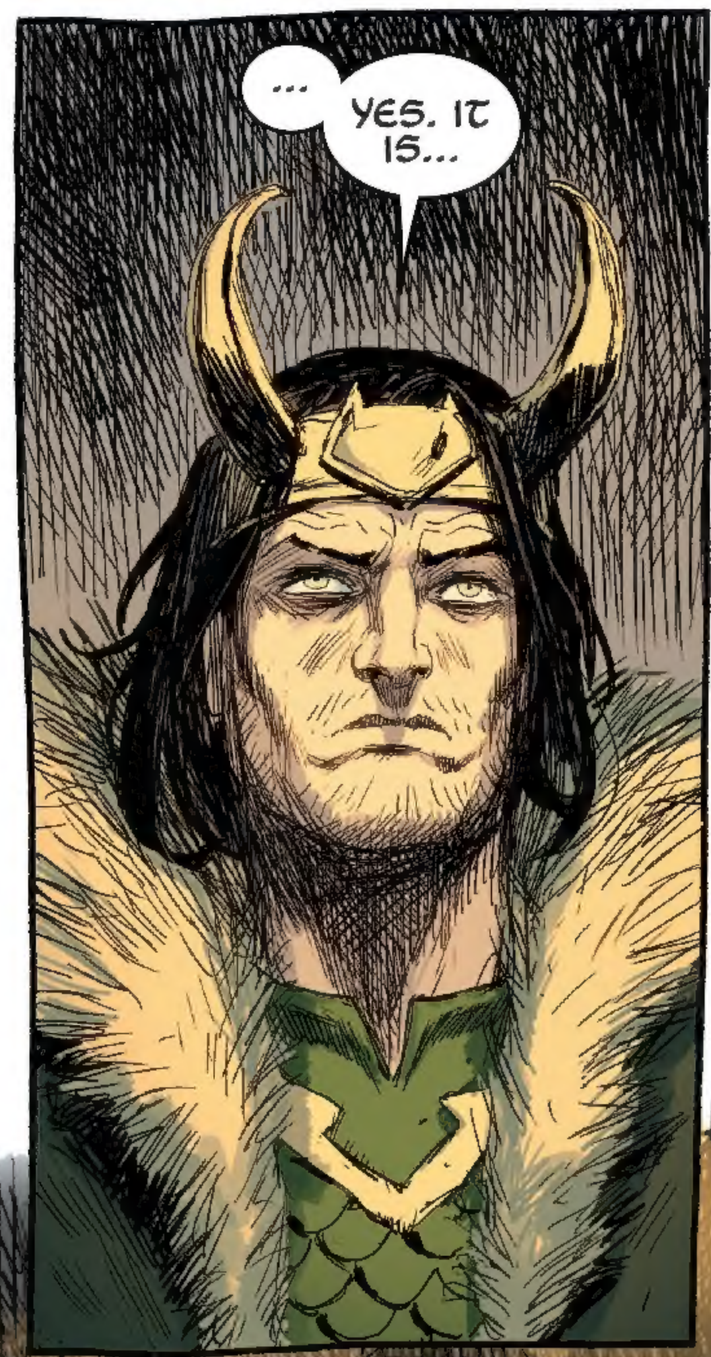
THE TOURNAMENT.
I'LL DO MY BEST TO EXPLAIN THIS AS CONCISELY AS I POSSIBLY CAN, BUT...
...WELL, LIKE MUCH OF THIS, I'M...STILL TRYING TO MAKE SENSE OF IT.
ONCE EVERY FEW DECADES, *THE VISHANTI* HOLD A GATHERING OF SORCERERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD TO ENGAGE IN MYSTICAL COMBAT.
THE WINNER EARNS THE DISTINCTION OF BECOMING THIS REALM'S *SORCERER SUPREME.*
I HAVE HAD THE HONOR OF ATTENDING THREE OF THESE TOURNAMENTS IN MY TIME.
THE FIRST TWO, I WON...

THE THIRD...
WHAT?! VISHANTI... FORGIVE ME, BUT... WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
WE HAVE CHOSEN A NEW SORCERER SUPREME, STEPHEN STRANGE. THIS ONE THANKS YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE.
BUT...BUT I WON! I DID EVERYTHING YOU--
YOU HAVE BEATEN THE OTHER MYSTICS, THIS IS TRUE. BUT YOU HAVE NOT WON.
THERE WILL BE A NEW SORCERER SUPREME NOW, STEPHEN STRANGE. THIS ONE ALSO GIVES ITS GRATITUDE.
...
WHO?
LOKI LAUFEYSON.

...
WHAT?!
HE WASN'T EVEN COMPETING. HELL, HE WASN'T EVEN *INVITED.*
I'M SORRY, WHAT?
IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT A MORTAL CAN NO LONGER FULFILL THE ROLE OF SORCERER SUPREME.
LOKI LAUFEYSON, YOU ARE NOW THE APPOINTED PROTECTOR OF THIS REALM. WITH ALL OF THE POWER AND RESP--
AH, WELL NOW, LET'S JUST...TAKE A MOMENT, SHALL WE?
I MEAN... SURELY THIS IS A MISTAKE, NO? I WAS...I WAS JUST CURIOUS.
I HAD HEARD ALL ABOUT THESE WIZARDING CUPS, AND I'D NEVER BEEN TO ONE, SO...





THIS IS NOT YOUR CONCERN. YOU WILL HAVE NO PART IN THIS NEXT CHAPTER, STEPHEN STRA--

HOW DARE YOU?! I HAVE PROTECTED THIS REALM FOR--

LISTEN TO YOUR RAISED WORDS AGAINST US!

FEEL THE HATRED AND THE PETTINESS CRAWLING AND TWISTING AROUND INSIDE YOUR SOUL.

YOU FORGET YOURSELF, MAGE!

BEAR WITNESS TO YOUR OWN HEART, STEPHEN STRANGE.

AFTER ALL THAT WE HAVE GIVEN THAT YOU HAVE LOST...

AFTER ALL OF THE TIMES YOU HAVE FAILED THIS REALM...

...THAT'S ABOUT THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT.

I'M SO SORRY, STEPHEN.

YEAH. ANYWAY, WE'RE ALMOST THERE. REMEMBER WHEN WE GET THE--

AND THEN YOU HAD TO GIVE HIM YOUR HOUSE AND YOUR GIRLFRIEND?

→SIGH←

NO--ZELMA IS NOT MY GIRLFRIEND. JUST SOMEONE I CARE ABOUT VERY MUCH.

BUT THE HOUSE.

YEAH, BOB, THE HOUSE THING IS TRUE. BUT, THIS ISN'T ABOUT THE HOUSE. IT'S NOT ABOUT THE TITLE OR THE TOURNAMENT EITHER. IT'S ABOUT--

THE POSSIBLE DESTRUCTION OF THE MAGICAL REALM AND THEN OUR REALM AND THEN MORE THAN LIKELY THE ENTIRETY OF THE MULTIVERSE AFTER IT?

BINGO.

AND IT'S NOT PERSONAL? NOT ABOUT YOUR CLOAK OR YOUR DOG OR ANYTHING ELSE?
I MEAN, IT'S A LITTLE ABOUT THE DOG.

STEPHEN, PLEASE... I WANT TO HELP YOU DO THIS, I DO.
BUT...*THE VOID*...
ROBERT, I TOLD YOU, THAT'S ALL OVER NOW. I FIXED THAT. THE VOID IS--

I KNOW YOU BELIEVE THAT. BUT, WITH EVERY GOOD DEED I PERFORM, THE VOID WILL RETURN IT A HUNDREDFOLD WITH EVIL.
HE *ALWAYS* DOES.

YEAH, WELL, IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL ANY BETTER...

...WHAT WE'RE DOING ISN'T EXACTLY "GOOD."

DING-DONG

HELLO, STEPHEN.

I HAVE TO SAY, THIS PLAN OF YOURS IS THE DUMBEST, MOST INSANE THING YOU'VE EVER CONCOCTED. AND FOR YOU, THAT'S REALLY SAYING SOMETHING.

HI, SENTRY.

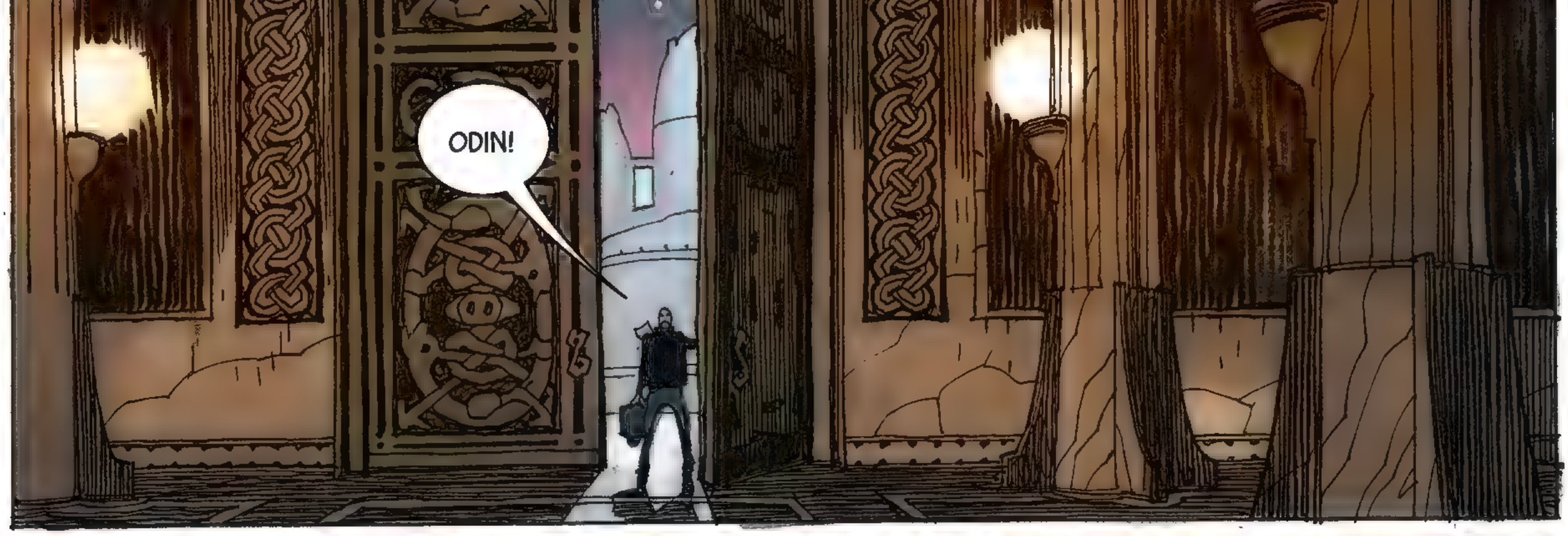
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, OLD FRIEND.

AND YOU AS WELL. EVEN IF IT IS ON THE EVE OF YOUR DEATH.

WELL, THAT'S NOT REALLY THE PLAN...

LOOK, WHATEVER HAPPENED BETWE--
HERE'S THE SPELL YOU ASKED FOR. HAD TO BUY IT FROM A DARK WEB GOBLIN MARKET.
SHIPPING WAS MURDER. I'LL INVOICE YOU.
...
YOU COULD HAVE JUST USED MY ACCOUNT. I PAY EXTRA TO HAVE FREE SHIPPING.
RIGHT. BUT THEN YOU WOULDN'T HAVE A FUN EXCUSE TO COME AND BOTHER ME.
WHEN ARE YOU COMING BACK?
WHEN ARE YOU?
FAIR ENOUGH. JUST KEEP YOUR END OF THE PLAN UP WHEN THIS IS OVER, OKAY? I'LL TEXT YOU WHEN WE GET BA--
WAIT...
...I KNOW YOU ARE PUTTING THIS FACE ON FOR ME, TO MASK YOUR VERY EARNED TREPIDATION.
BUT, PLEASE... STEPHEN, WHEN YOU ARRIVE WHERE YOU ARE GOING...
DO NOT PLAY AT ARROGANCE...

"...ASGARD IS NOT A PLACE THAT WILL ABIDE BY FOOLS."



WELL. THIS WAS A VERY SHORT-LIVED PLAN.

YOU... ARE NOT ODIN...

I HATE ASGARDIAN POLITICS.

THIS IS...NOT GREAT. ODIN, I COULD TALK TO. BARGAIN WITH. THIS GUY...

WHO ARE YOU?

WHO ARE YOU?

THIS GUY DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THE BARGAINING TYPE.

I AM *CUL BORSON*. BROTHER OF ODIN, GOD OF FEAR AND KING REGENT OF ASGARD.

AND YOU...ARE TRESPASSING.

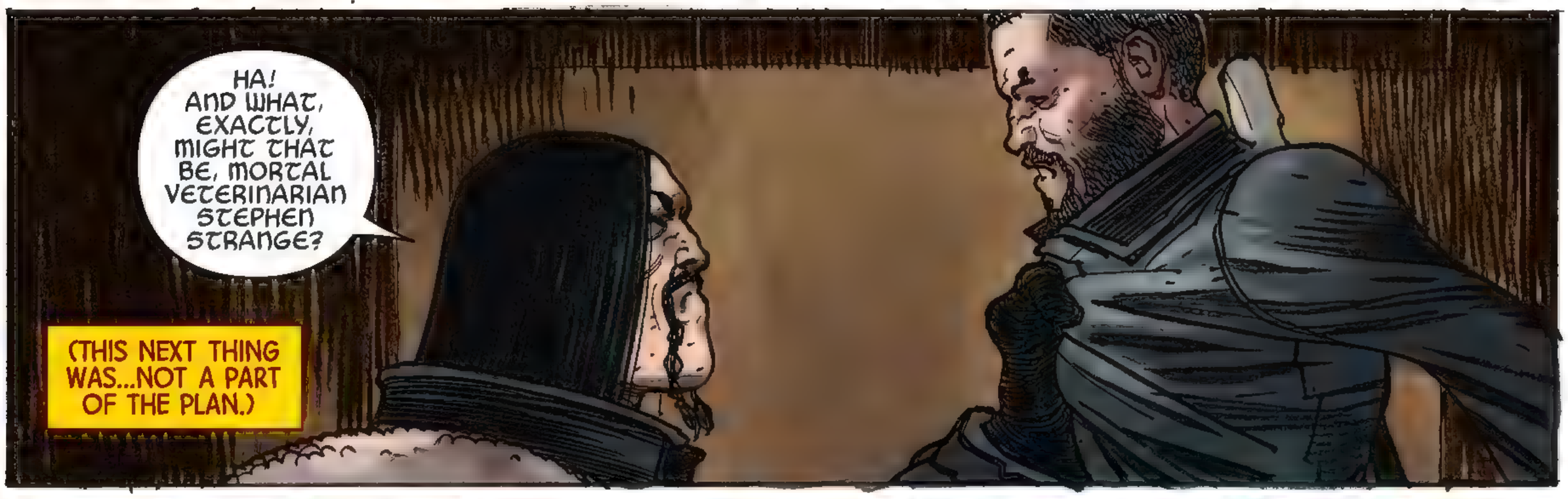
HI, CUL. I'M STEPHEN STRANGE. I'M A VETERINARIAN.

AND YOU... ARE IN MY WAY.

HA! BEFORE I KILL YOU, TELL ME...HOW DID YOU SLITHER PAST HEIMDALL?

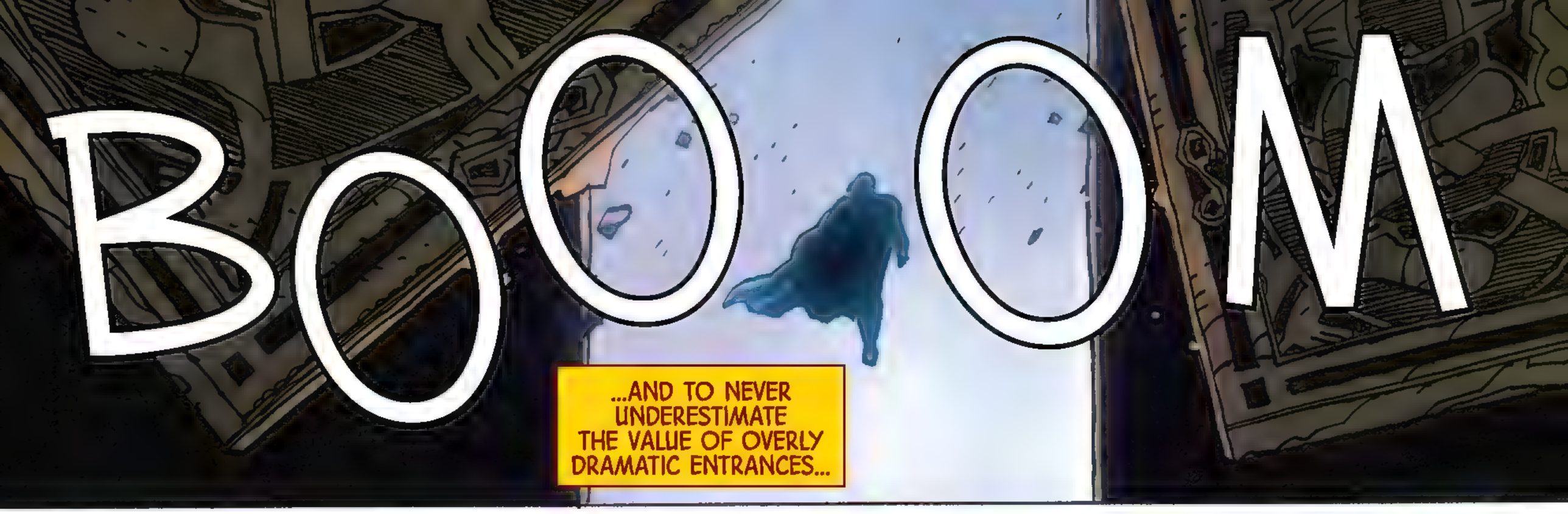
OH, THAT. YEAH...I SHOULD MENTION I ALSO DO MAGIC SOMETIMES.

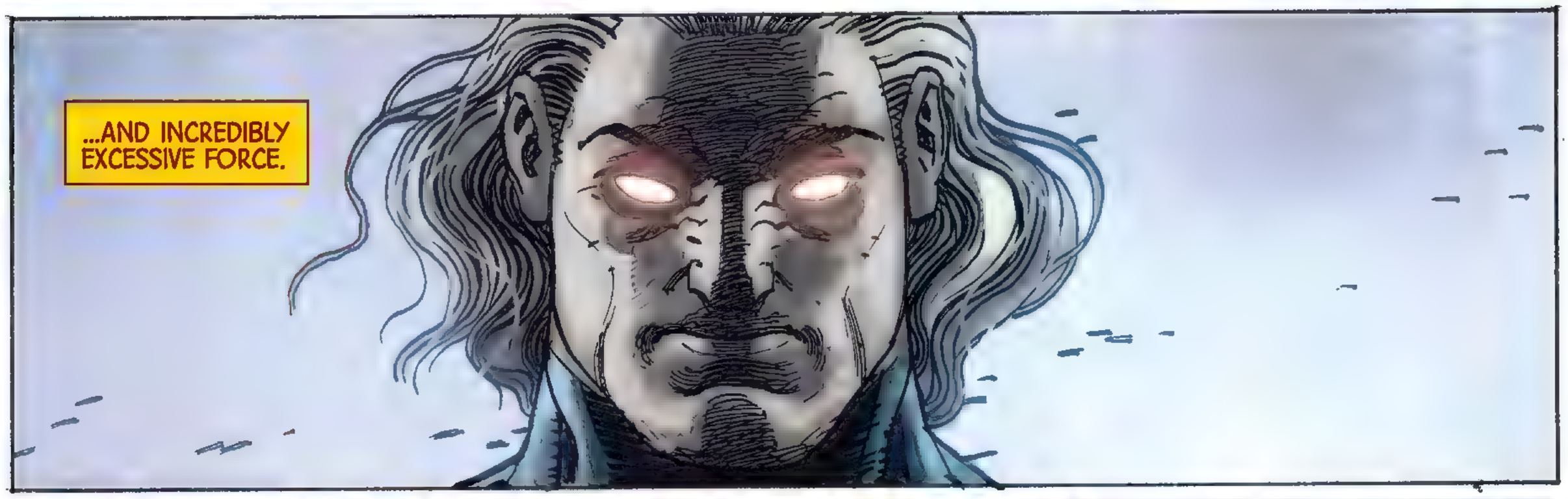
FRIEND OF MINE GAVE ME A SPELL THAT CONCEALS ONE FROM HEIMDALL'S GAZE. HE BOUGHT IT OFF SOME *FROST GIANTS* WHO SOLD IT ON THE INTERNET.
BUT, HONESTLY, CUL... YOU HAVE BIGGER THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT RIGHT NOW...

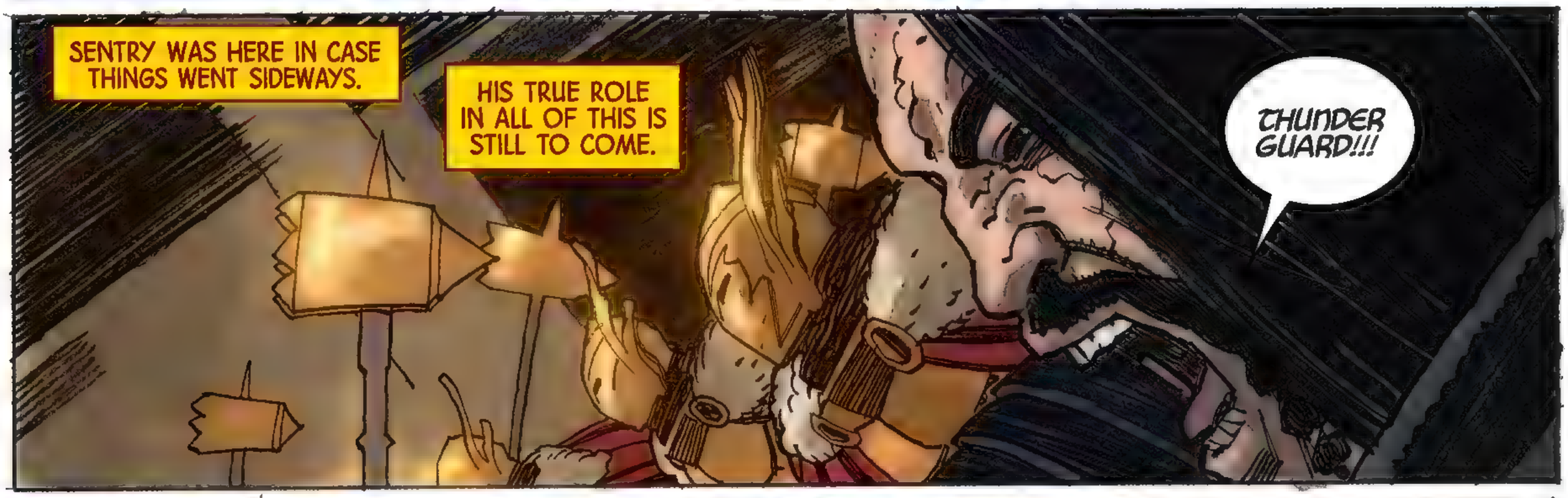

HA! AND WHAT, EXACTLY, MIGHT THAT BE, MORTAL VETERINARIAN STEPHEN STRANGE?
(THIS NEXT THING WAS...NOT A PART OF THE PLAN.)

THE BIG ANGRY BLOND GOD AT YOUR FRONT DOOR. AND PROBABLY NOT EVEN THE ONE YOU'RE THINKING OF...

LUCKILY, ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS YOU LEARN AS A MAGE IS TO THINK ON YOUR FEET...
NICE TO MEET YOU! SORRY ABOUT YOUR DOOR.
WHAT... DOOR? WHAT TRICKERY IS--


BOOOM
...AND TO NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE VALUE OF OVERLY DRAMATIC ENTRANCES...


...AND INCREDIBLY EXCESSIVE FORCE.


SENTRY WAS HERE IN CASE THINGS WENT SIDEWAYS.
HIS TRUE ROLE IN ALL OF THIS IS STILL TO COME.
THUNDER GUARD!!!

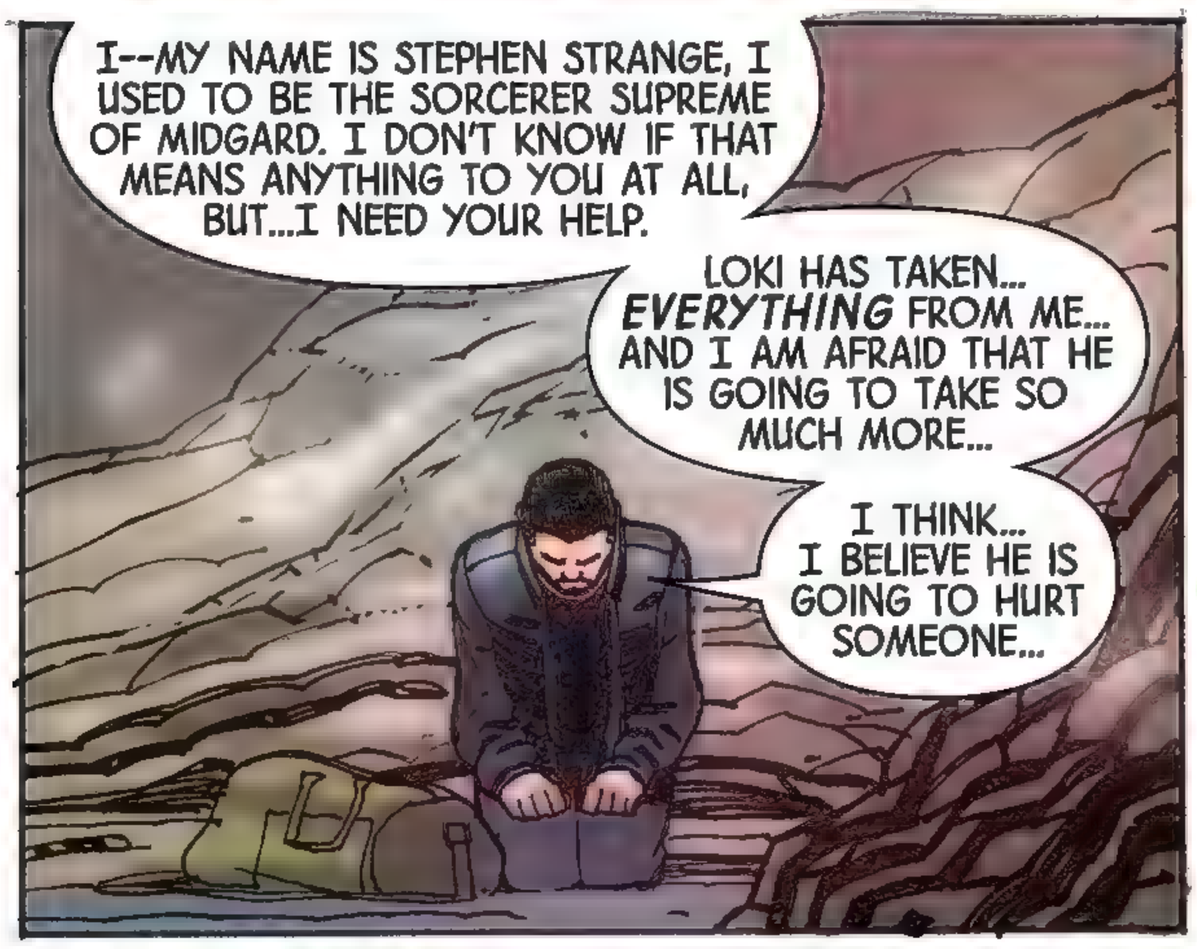
OF COURSE, I CONSIDERED THOR FOR THIS...
...BUT, WELL, SHE WOULD HAVE, PERHAPS CORRECTLY, TALKED ME OUT OF THIS NEXT BIT.
BESIDES, SENTRY HAS A RATHER LONG STREAK OF ASSAULTING ASGARD IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER.
SO, WHEN IT COMES TO STRIKING FEAR IN THE HEARTS OF GODS...

...HE MAKES FOR ONE HELL OF A DISTRACTION.
I DIDN'T WANT THINGS TO GO THIS WAY.
I WAS GOING TO TRY AND TALK THIS OUT PEACEFULLY WITH ODIN. CALL IN A FAVOR. BEG, IF I HAD TO.
EVER SINCE THE *EMPIRIKUL*, MY MAGIC HAS BEEN SEVERELY DEPLETED.
THE ASGARDIANS HAVE ACCESS TO AN ALMOST UNLIMITED WELL OF IT. MORE MAGIC THAN THEY WILL EVER NEED...
I WANTED TO ASK PERMISSION TO BORROW JUST THE SMALLEST *FRACTION* OF IT.
BUT NOW, UNFORTUNATELY...

...I THINK I'M JUST GOING TO STEAL IT.

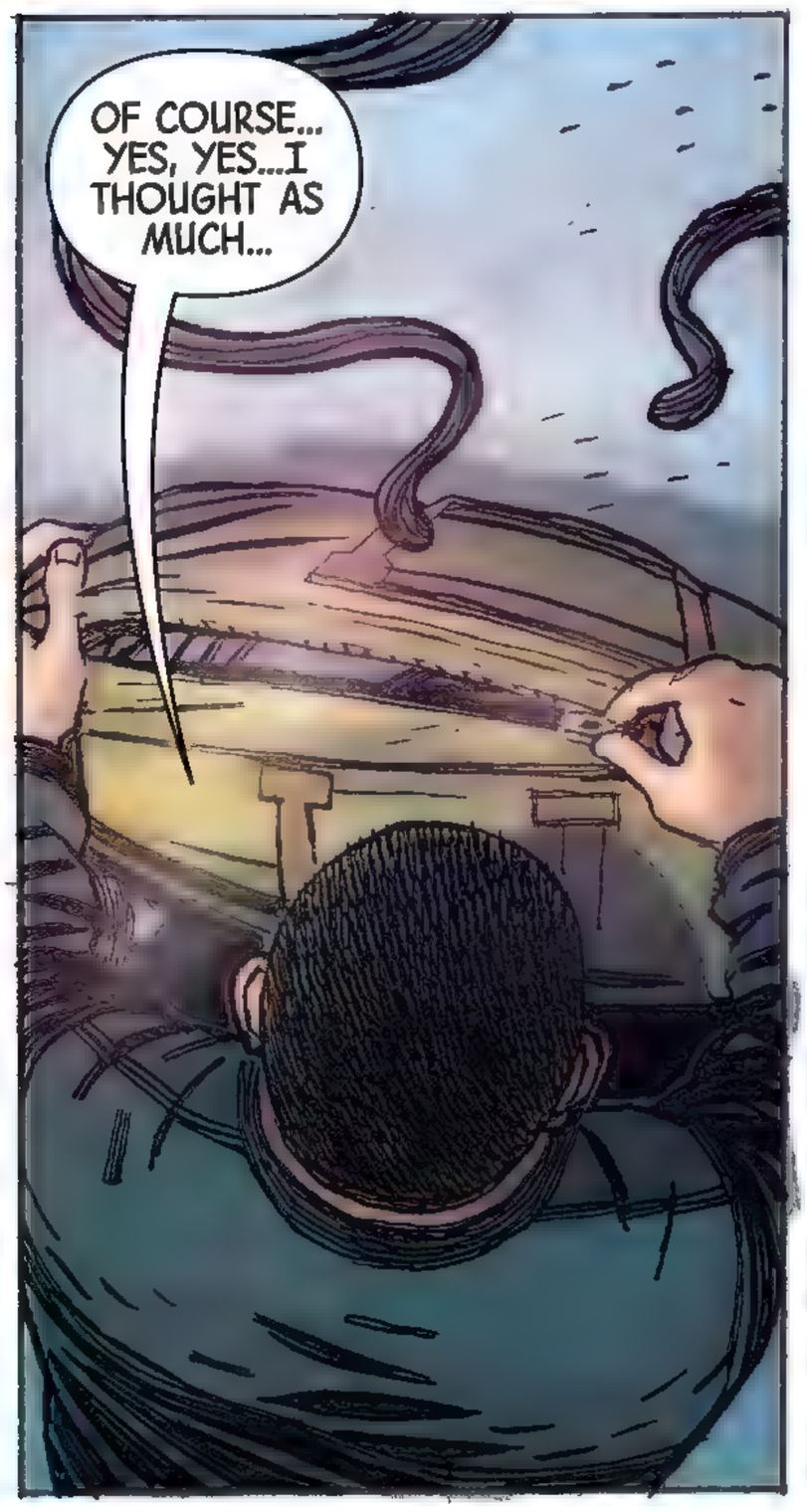
YGGDRASIL, I...

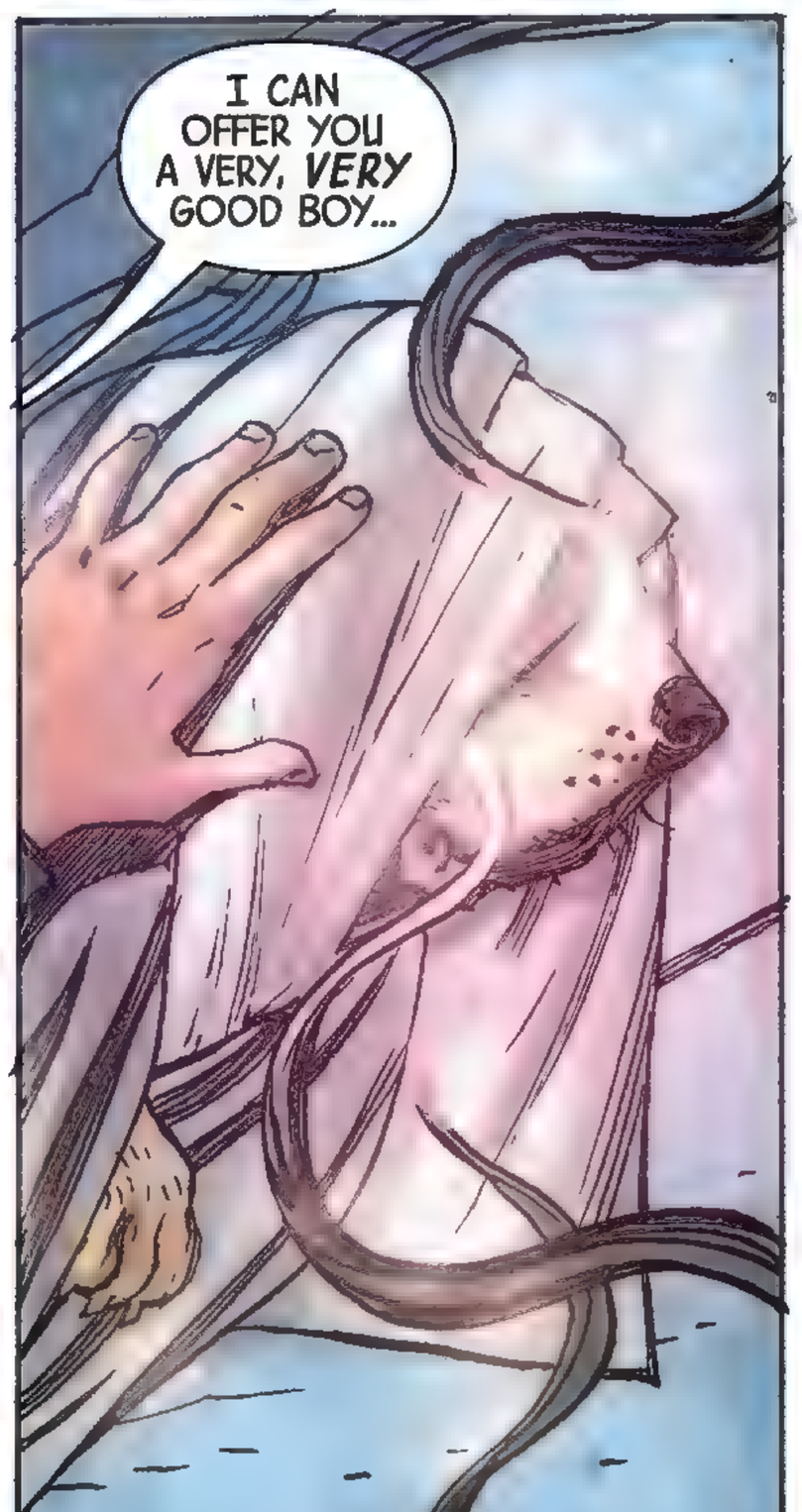
GOD, HOW DO I DO THIS...



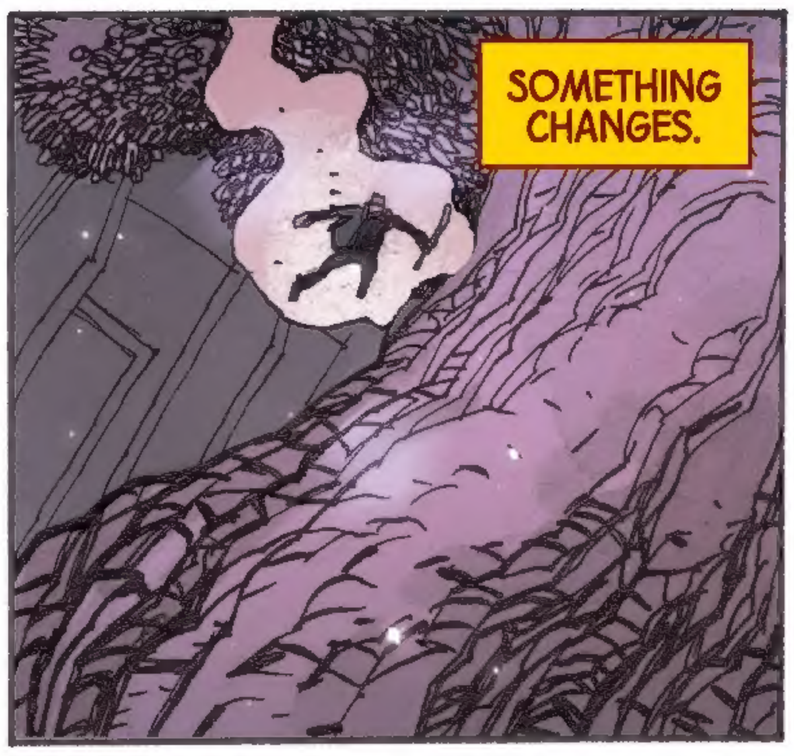
YOU WANT... YOU NEED A SACRIFICE? NO... NO, NOT A SACRIFICE...

...A TRADE? NO, AN OFFERING!





PLEASE...I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ELSE...
AGH!
AH, PLEASE!
IT IS A WORTHY OFFERING, STEPHEN STRANGE.



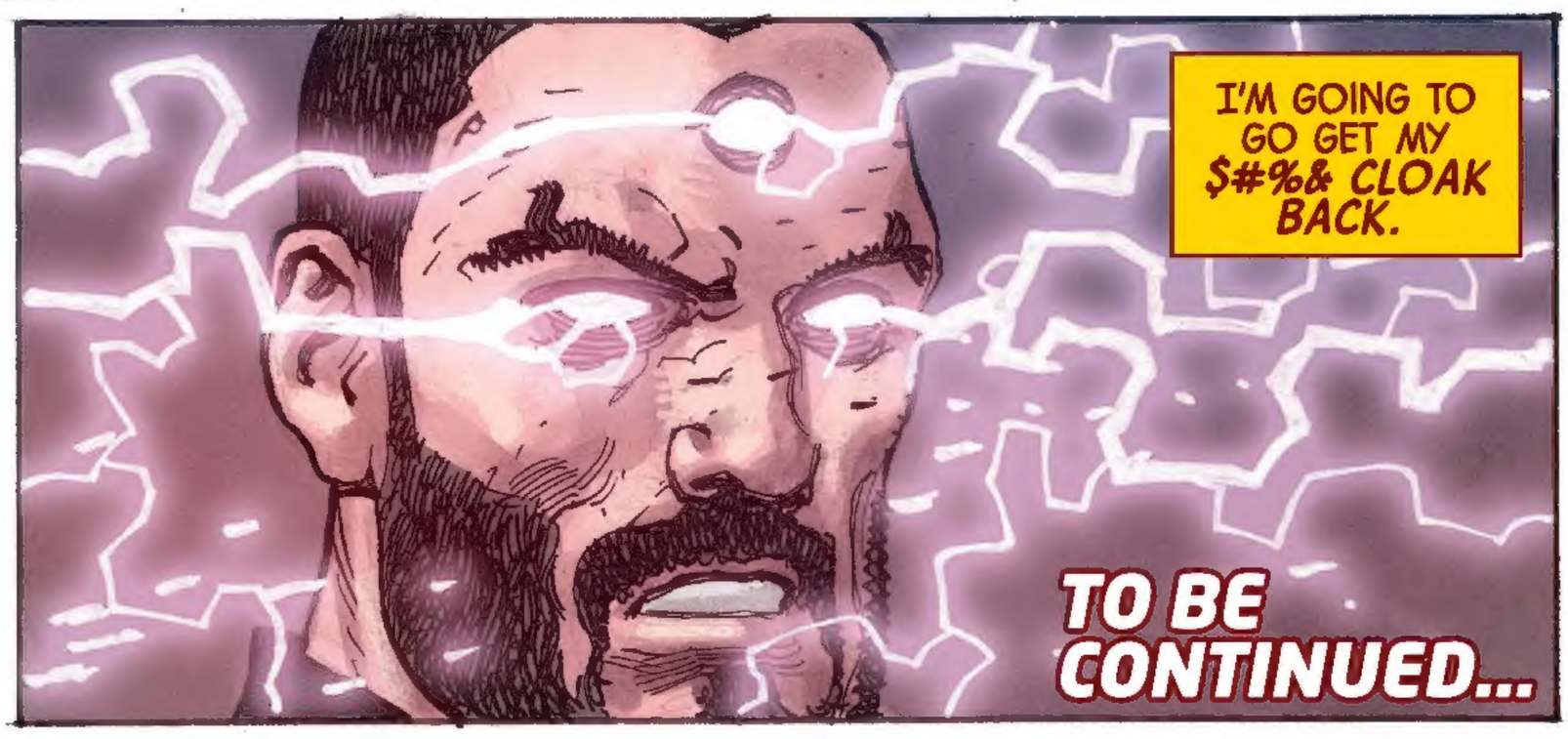
MORE MAGIC THAN I HAVE EVER KNOWN. MORE THAN I THINK I CAN CONTAIN INSIDE OF THIS...BODY.

I CAN SEE EVERYTHING. I *AM EVERYTHING.*

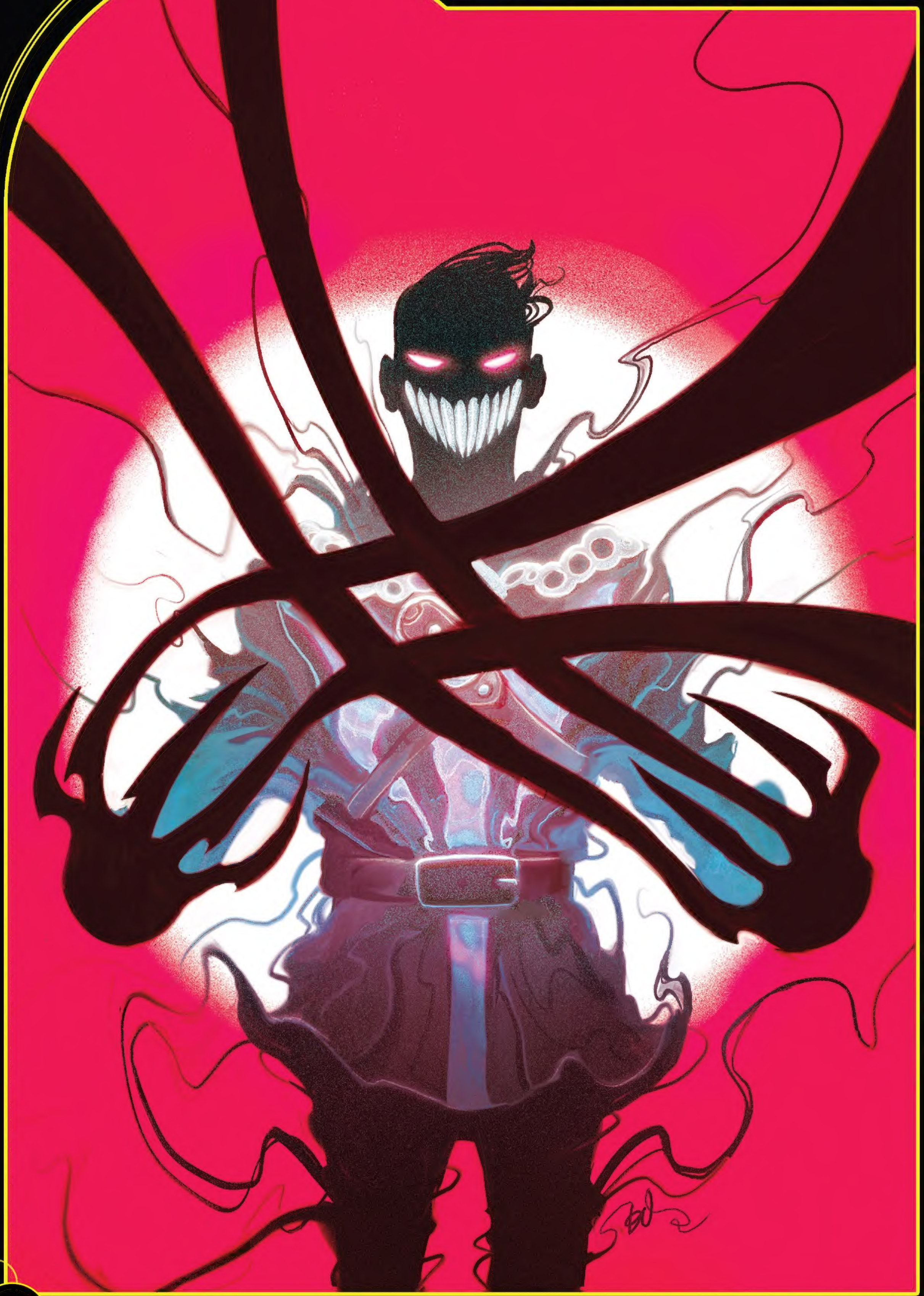
SO MUCH MORE THAN A SORCERER...I DON'T THINK I'M EVEN MORTAL ANYMORE...

NO. I...I AM A *GOD OF MAGIC...*

AND NOW... I...



NEXT: WHAT WILL IT COST TO DEFEAT LOKI?
#384 ON SALE IN JANUARY!



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ZONE